Hands On®

July/August 2007

issue no. 4

The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association

Mark Your Calendars for NMTAW

October 21–27, 2007

For more than 10 years, AMTA members like you have been promoting the benefits of massage during AMTA's National Massage Therapy Awareness Week® (NMTAW), which takes place each year during the last full week in October. When you think of that, it's no surprise that 25 million more Americans are getting massage each year than just 10 years ago. This is a huge accomplishment, and it gets us one step closer to AMTA's big goal of AMTA members being the choice for massage as a routine part of society's health and well-being.

Now is the perfect time to start thinking about how you want to celebrate NMTAW this year. Use this week to reach out to fellow members in your area. It's a great way to network and meet new people. Connect with your chapter and find out how you can get involved in chapter activities. Take this opportunity to get in touch with old and new clients. Remind them of the benefits of massage and how it can make a difference in their lives.

Whether you decide to celebrate on your own, with fellow members, with your chapter or all three, you have many tools to help you make the most of this week. Visit the NMTAW section in the Members Section of the AMTA website, where you'll find:

- **NMTAW Logo**—use this logo on all your promotional materials.
- **NMTAW Poster**—hang it in your place of work, at a NMTAW event or even a public place like the local library or coffee shop. You can also attach your business card to the poster. Look for your free poster in the Fall issue of **mtj**. Additional posters will be available for a nominal fee on the AMTA website starting in July.
- **NMTAW Event and Activity Report Form**—use this form to report your NMTAW activities and events to the National Office.
- **NMTAW FAQs**—use this as a quick reference on how to participate in NMTAW.

It's important to have a nationally recognized week that educates the public about massage therapy, while building consumer preference for AMTA massage therapists. NMTAW has proven to be a valuable tool for promoting the benefits of massage to the public. Any effort, no matter the size, can make a real difference. Let's all continue the momentum we've started and make this the most successful NMTAW yet!

If you have questions about how you can participate in NMTAW, contact Karla Karapetian at kkarapetian@amtamassage.org, or toll-free 877-905-2700, ext. 133.

Beyond the Body: Building Research Literacy in Australia

By Rebecca Barnett

Conference attendees had a unique opportunity to compare the state of the profession in the United States and Australia at the Association of Massage Therapists (AMT) 17th annual conference, October 7–8, 2006, in Sydney, Australia. AMT decided to base the conference entirely on the theme of research. Martha Brown Menard (VA) was invited "downunder" to deliver the keynote address and present several other workshops and lectures.

Rebecca Barnett is secretary of AMT and chief conference coordinator. She has been a practicing massage therapist for more than 10 years and an active industry advocate for most of that time. Here, she shares the triumphs and tribulations of organizing a research-based conference.

Let's face it—research is just not sexy. It tends to conjure images of nerdy scientists in polyester lab coats. So, promoting a research-based conference to a community of professionals who are already turned off by lab or office stereotypes is a daunting task. Couple these preconceptions with an obsession in the massage therapy profession with learning new hand skills, often to the exclusion of all else, and the task of drawing massage professionals to research starts to seem impossible.

The research agenda in Australia is still very underdeveloped and will require much care to reach full bloom. In this context, hosting a research conference involves a degree of risk and boldness, as well as a strong commitment to changing people's perceptions.

Before the conference, AMT focused a lot of energy on demonstrating the immediate relevance of research to the day-to-day experiences of therapists in the clinic. We published a series of articles in our journal on the themes of empowerment and efficacy through knowledge:

- how research can enhance our understanding of the work we do and our communication with our clients;
- how it can help us establish a common language with the allopathic medical community to better promote the benefits of our work;

Continued on page 5

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Information contained in *Hands On* does not necessarily reflect the opinions or beliefs of AMTA and/or the staff of *Hands On.* AMTA, founded in 1943, is the oldest and largest nonprofit, national, professional organization serving massage therapists in the United States, Canada and 27 other countries.

Membership in AMTA is open to all qualified individuals regardless of race, creed, national origin, gender, age, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or physical handicap.

Mission: To serve AMTA members while advancing the art, science and practice of massage therapy.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Fellow AMTA Ambassadors,

When the AMTA Board of Directors and staff work to plan the future direction of our association, we use a number of tools. The most important of these is feedback from you, our members. A survey is one of the best tools AMTA has to find out your perspective and your answers make a difference when AMTA plans how to best serve our members.

This newsletter is another example of how your opinions have an influence. Through your responses, you've let us know that *Hands On* is an important benefit that you find useful. However, we continue to listen, and because of your suggestions, we're working to improve the tone and content of the newsletter further.

Answering surveys is just one of the ways what you say makes a difference in how your association moves forward. Another way you can have influence is to volunteer, for example, by submitting your name and resume for consideration for the *Hands On* Editorial Review Operational Committee. Volunteers on the *Hands On* operational committee play an important role in improving *Hands On* content, reviewing articles for relevance and suggesting topics and writers.

It's easy to volunteer for this or any other position, chapter or national, by logging in to the Members Section of the website and clicking on the "Volunteer" link. This will take you to AMTA's Volunteer Database, where you can post a volunteer resume and search for open volunteer positions. Or, you can simply contact Melissa Spani, governance and volunteer development assistant, at mspani@amtamassage.org or toll-free 877-905-2700, ext. 189.

AMTA is dedicated to serving its professional, student and school members and, by focusing on the quality of member benefits, customer service, the chapter experience and the National Convention, AMTA will deliver more value to each member.

I urge you to enhance your ambassadorship for AMTA by helping to improve our offerings for all members, through the expertise that only you can offer. I urge you to continue to offer your opinions by responding to the surveys that you will receive from time to time. And I urge you to contact me with your views and constructive criticism at DrLeena@amtamassage.org.

Remember talent wins games, but teamwork and collaboration win championships—be a ***champion***.

Proud to be an AMTA member,

Leena S. Guptha, DO
AMTA President

Operational Committees Get Volunteers Involved

Over the last few years, AMTA has developed several new ways to offer volunteers more opportunities for direct input into AMTA's work. One change has been to shift some volunteer activity from national standing committees to operational committees.

Operational committees aren't committees in a traditional sense. They're made up of a group of volunteers who have particular experience and are called on as needed by a staff leader. Their work may be to fill a need determined by the AMTA Board of Directors, or to enhance the value of AMTA products, programs and services. Operational committees help volunteers offer their best skills to the association and use their time wisely. They also provide flexibility to respond to changing needs in the association and the profession.

An excellent example of what volunteers can contribute through this approach is the Educational Strategy and Programming Operational Committee. The committee members helped develop 20 NCBTMB-approved online courses that attracted approximately 1,800 users last year. Having fulfilled its goal to make continuing education opportunities in massage more easily available to members, the committee has disbanded.

Jessica Libero (CT), a member of the Editorial Review Operational Committee for **mtj**, has appreciated both her involvement with **mtj** and the flexibility of her time commitment to her committee. In a recent comment to National Office staff she says, "This is a super way for me to stay connected to AMTA and the massage world. So I appreciate it immensely."

The most recently formed operational committee is the Government Relations Operational Committee. It has a specific focus on LLAP granting, and advising staff and the board on AMTA's government relations program. Staff handles ongoing program administration and delivery of the program through chapter government relations volunteers. Committee members are also resources for information on the impact of the program on massage therapists.

The change to operational committees helps make AMTA products, programs and services more valuable and helps deliver them quickly. And, it makes it easier for members to volunteer and get involved. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Melissa Spani, governance and volunteer development assistant, at mspani@amtamassage.org or toll-free 877-905-2700, ext. 189.

Board Considers, Approves, Acts at June Meeting

Before their June meeting in Phoenix, the AMTA Board of Directors met in retreat to update the association's strategic direction. They discussed recent research on what matters most to AMTA members about their membership, and current changes in the marketplace that affect the massage therapy profession. The board then identified priorities for goals and objectives for FY08/09. The Planning Committee, which is separate from the board, participated in the retreat for the first time this year. The committee will use the board's priorities to develop and recommend strategies for the association for the coming year.

In its June meeting, the board:

- **Considered issues of AMTA culture** >>www.amtamassage.org/about/core_documents.html
  The Core Values and Key Behaviors Workgroup presented rewritten AMTA core values to the board. As the board reviewed the proposed core values, they realized they needed to have more discussion on the nature of AMTA membership before the core values could be finalized. Accordingly, the board decided to make no changes to the core values at this time, and dismissed the workgroup. The board will hold the necessary discussions and then revisit the core values.

  As part of helping volunteer members succeed in their activities, AMTA has been creating and updating job descriptions through the work of the Governance Committee. At this meeting the board approved job descriptions for board supervisors and board liaisons, to be effective immediately.

- **Approved changes to bylaws** >>www.amtamassage.org/member/governance.html
  AMTA is committed to having the best possible volunteer leadership on chapter boards of directors. Accordingly, the board approved changes to the bylaws to clarify eligibility, election and position requirements for chapter boards. These changes, based on recommendations from the Governance Committee, will become effective January 1, 2008. The board also directed committee members and staff to draw up a plan to prepare chapters for these changes.

  Updated job descriptions for chapter delegates to the House of Delegates (HOD) state that they are limited to two consecutive elected terms. For consistency, the board approved including this term limit language in the bylaws.

  The board also approved a change to make it clear that the current bylaw language—which requires members elected to the national board to resign from all other positions—does not apply to certain appointed positions that some board members are required to hold.

- **Acted on recommendations of the HOD** >>www.amtamassage.org/member/house_delegates.html
  In October 2006, the HOD recommended that the AMTA Board of Directors create a workgroup to research an equitable division of revenue among chapters whose members take AMTA online courses. A resulting financial report shows the online education program hasn't made a profit yet, so there isn't enough information to determine the impact of the online education program on chapter education revenues. The board directed staff to monitor the program and report back no later than September 2010.

  Also in October 2006, the HOD recommended AMTA join the Coalition to Preserve Patient Access to Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Services. The board had directed staff to research the advantages and disadvantages for AMTA's members, as well as the costs of joining the coalition. After reviewing this research, the board decided not to join the coalition at this time, but directed staff to stay aware of coalition activities during FY07/08.

Finally, the board approved the distribution of the FY06/07 financial report and independent auditor report. You can find FY06/07 financial details in the special insert in the middle of this issue.

AMTA Advertising Wins Gold Award

AMTA has won the Gold Healthcare Advertising Award, the highest honor, in the category of magazine advertising series (non-hospital) for its consumer magazine advertising campaign. This award, sponsored by *Healthcare Marketing Report*, recognizes excellence in healthcare advertising and is judged on effectiveness, creativity, consumer appeal and overall impact.

The award-winning ads, created in 2006, feature AMTA members and their clients. The ads focus on the many benefits of massage and the importance of looking for an AMTA member. These ads have appeared in national magazines including *Alternative Medicine, Body+Soul, Health, Fitness, Shape, Redbook* and *Working Mother*. The ad campaign will continue to run through the end of this year.

fingerprints

Member Pursuit Gives Birth to Accredited Oncology Massage Program

By Pete Reinwald

Jim Zazeski (NJ) has developed a venture that's very much a part of him. "This is my baby," he says.

Zazeski's "baby" is the first oncology massage certification program in the United States that is accredited by the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA), and is approved by the state of New Jersey. The program is a partnership between the Institute for Therapeutic Massage Inc. (ITM), where Zazeski works as program director, and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark.

The program has been designed to meet the requirements of New Jersey's certification standards, and provide students with the knowledge needed to take the National Certification Examination for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork.

Zazeski, a nationally certified massage therapist since 1998, says the medical community is increasingly accepting massage as a treatment in relieving many cancer symptoms—a key consideration in the oncology certification program's development.

The program began this May. Each class of 750 hours will last one year and involve 12 to 16 students.

Students will get hands-on training on the oncology floors at the university's hospital. They will learn the science of palliative care, plus the pathological, spiritual and emotional aspects of cancer. They will work directly with cancer patients and learn how to work with and around hospital equipment, including lines and tubes.

The program has Zazeski's fingerprints all over it. Lisa Helbig, ITM's owner and executive director, says she started discussing the idea with Zazeski amid construction of a state-of-the-art cancer center at the university hospital, recently published research on the benefits of massage therapy for cancer patients, and an underserved minority population within Newark.

ITM began a general hospital-based massage therapy program at the university hospital in 2000, and the basic program has since expanded to three other New Jersey hospitals. Zazeski says the university hospital was open to them working with the patients on the cancer ward. After initial discussions and inquiries, Helbig says she turned over the project to Zazeski.

"He's very excited about this program," Helbig says. "There are so few practitioners trained to work in that type of setting."

Zazeski says he was influenced at the Boulder College of Massage Therapy (BCMT) by his instructors in neuromuscular therapy and Swedish and orthopedic massage. He graduated from BCMT in 1997, and he earned an associate degree in massage therapy from the school in 2001. He has been at ITM for nearly four years, and he continues to teach part-time.

Students practice oncology massage techniques on a traditional massage table and on a hospital bed.

"My mother was a registered nurse for many, many years, and that inspired me and took me in the direction of health care and massage," Zazeski says. "It's been amazing. I can't even tell you the emotional benefit that I get out of it."

To learn more about the oncology massage certification program, please visit the ITM website at www.massageprogram.com.

Volunteer for Ironman Wisconsin 2007

Massage therapists are needed to volunteer for the sixth annual Ironman Wisconsin Triathlon in Madison, Wisconsin, on Sunday, September 9. More than 2,000 triathletes from all over the world will participate in the event. Massage therapists are needed to provide post-event massage.

Jennifer Crye (WI), LMT, has been the volunteer massage captain for the last three years. "Since I've been volunteering for Ironman, I've had nothing but glowing reports from the massage therapists and massage students who have participated. It's a fascinating and rewarding experience to work with these incredible athletes from all over the world," says Crye.

Jonathan Walton (WI), WCMT, who will be joining Crye as co-captain this year, reports: "It really is empowering to witness how these athletes, from all walks of life and nations around the globe, push their bodies to the limit and beyond! Their bodies respond very quickly to massage and the difference is striking. If you want to see results in your work, you should participate as a massage therapist at Ironman Wisconsin."

If you're interested in volunteering for this event, go to www.sportsinwisconsin.com, click on "Ironman Wisconsin," and then follow the "Volunteers" link. You can find massage under "Misc. Positions." For more information please contact Jennifer Crye at bodyharmony2044@yahoo.com or Jonathan Walton at jonathanwaltonbodyworker@yahoo.com, or call 608-235-5367.

bringing more value to AMTA members

AMTA had an increase in net assets for the fiscal year ending February 28, 2007, mainly because of a rise in the number of new members and favorable market conditions that increased investment income. This increase helps AMTA continue to improve service to members and advance the profession.

In FY06/07, AMTA focused on:

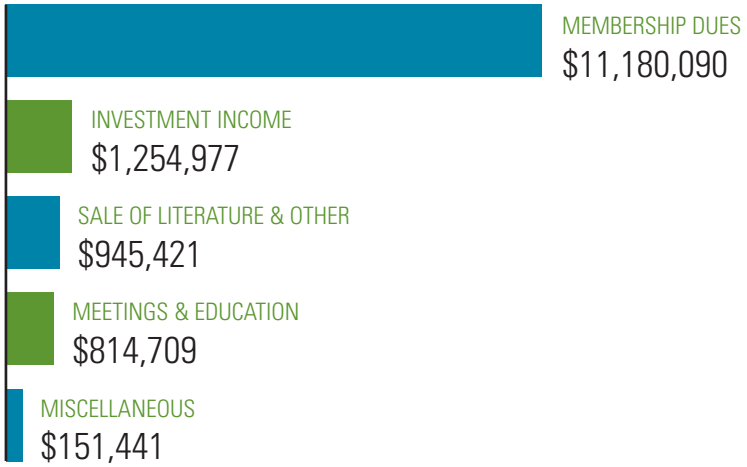
- enhancing the member experience by delivering more value in order to earn your commitment.
- advancing professional competency by providing tools to ensure you have the competencies, skills and professionalism to succeed.

AMTA also continued its advocacy for the massage therapy profession by actively pursuing licensure in every state.

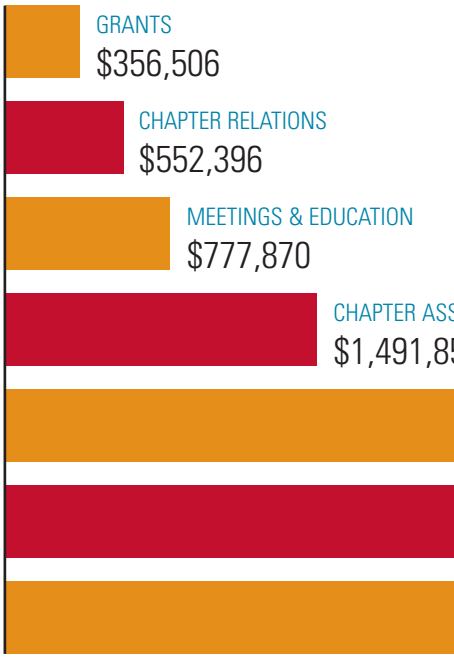
On the next two pages, you can see an overview of where AMTA revenue comes from, and how we use it to provide products, programs and services for your success.

fy06/07 highlights

REVENUE $14,346,638



EXPENSES $13,544,720



EXPENSES Bringing more value to members

ADMINISTRATIVE & GOVERNANCE
$3,500,746

This category covers expenses for your national board's activities, including meetings and planning, that set the direction of your association, and for National Office staff to carry out those plans. It includes administrative expenses such as operating costs for the Massage Therapy Foundation. It also covers costs associated with workgroups and committees, volunteer development, leadership training, and programs like government relations that promote the future of AMTA members and the massage therapy profession.

GRANTS
$356,506

The Grants category provides support to various organizations that advance the profession, including the Massage Therapy Foundation, the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation and the Integrative Healthcare Policy Consortium.

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING
$2,925,599

Communications and Marketing covers publications, which include **mtj**™ (*Massage Therapy Journal*®), *Hands On*®, *Chapter Officers' Bulletin*, *Council Communicator* and *massage student e-source*℠. It also covers costs for the AMTA website, *AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist*® national locator service, product development, and AMTA's online Shopping Mall, where members can get discounts on their favorite massage supplies. Costs for maintaining and improving optional member benefits, for recruitment and retention of members, and for promotion of massage therapy and AMTA members through media relations are also in this category.

This year saw the launch of a series of national magazine ads and Internet search ads to inform consumers about the benefits of choosing an AMTA massage therapist, and direct them to the locator service. In January 2007, 37 percent of AMTA members in the locator service reported new clients had mentioned the ads in the preceding 3 months. And, nearly 450,000 people searched for AMTA members through the locator service in FY06/07.

AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist
National Locator Service

The magazine ads were recently recognized for their excellence (see *AMTA Advertising Wins Gold Award*, page 3). **mtj**, too, has just been honored with awards for overall excellence, greatest improvement and outstanding innovation. You can read the full story on **mtj**'s awards in the next issue of *Hands On*.

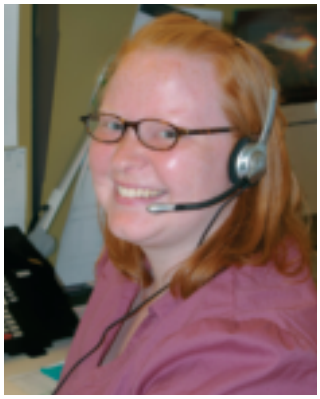
ASSISTANCE
852

COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING
$2,925,599

ADMINISTRATIVE & GOVERNANCE
$3,500,746

MEMBER SERVICES & SUPPORT
$3,939,751

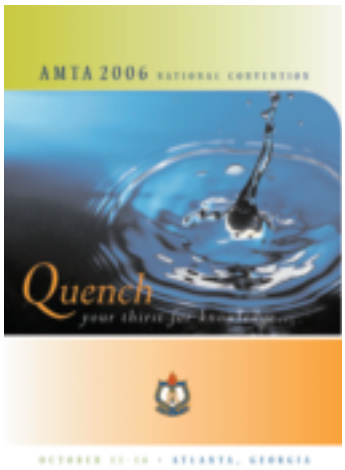
MEMBER SERVICES & SUPPORT
$3,939,751



Member Services and Support covers the costs of bringing you the benefit of member liability insurance and providing National Office staff to serve you and answer your questions.

Because members have let us know that customer service is important to them, in FY06/07 AMTA began working on a number of improvements. This began with many changes in procedure that enhanced efficiency and helped us to make service improvements, such as decreasing the average call wait time and average processing time for member requests. To help us deliver a higher quality of service and information to members, training for Member Services staff in both customer service and product knowledge was also a focus this year.

MEETINGS & EDUCATION
$777,870



This category contains costs for the AMTA National Convention, continuing education, professional development information for members—including the Massage Information Center—and Council of Schools member benefits. AMTA's Education Program continued development in FY06/07, offering online continuing education classes and member discounts on books and other home-study materials through the Center for Continuing Education.

All of the online courses have received approval from the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork and, wherever possible, from individual states as well. Approximately 1,800 visitors enrolled in more than 3,500 courses on AMTA's Online Training site last year at www.amtaonlinetraining.org.

continuing excellence continuing education

CHAPTER ASSISTANCE
$1,491,852

Chapter Assistance includes a portion of your member dues that goes directly to your chapter to support newsletters, education, face-to-face networking opportunities and other services for members.

CHAPTER RELATIONS
$552,396

Chapter Relations expenses provide various programs to train and assist chapter volunteers, as well as an awards program to recognize outstanding achievement and leadership. They also support the work of the House of Delegates.

bringing more value: AMTA member benefits

As an AMTA member, you have a lot of benefits available to you. That's why we've put together this list of the benefits you'll use most, and where you can find them. Keep this chart handy by your computer or on your refrigerator.

BENEFIT	WHAT IT IS	WHERE TO FIND IT
Publications		
Hands On® newsletter	Your bimonthly newsletter of the association that gives you tips, AMTA news and information about the profession.	Bimonthly in your mailbox or via e-mail, and online 24/7 at www.amtamassage.org/member/handsonindex.html.
mtj™ (*Massage Therapy Journal*®)	Your quarterly magazine with articles that keep you in touch with the profession and the needs of your clients.	Quarterly in your mailbox or online 24/7 at www.amtamassage.org/mtj.
massage student e-source℠	A bimonthly e-newsletter with articles and tips written just for those still in school or new to the profession.	Students are automatically signed up with their new membership, or any member can subscribe online at www.amtamassage.org/broadcast/esource/EsourceSubmissionForm.html.
Information and Education		
Massage Information Center	Your one source for information and references on the profession. Online you'll find links to a wealth of information, including online health libraries and research citations. Or, e-mail or call us with your practice questions and an experienced AMTA representative will be glad to help.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/infocenter/home.html, by e-mail at info@amtamassage.org or toll-free at 877-905-2700, ext. 143.
Continuing education opportunities	A variety of options for NCBTMB-approved onsite and online training, and education resources that help you stay current and improve your skills: • National Convention • Online education • Learn 'n Earn calendar • Professional development tips • Books and home-study courses	Online at www.amtamassage.org/cont_edu.html.
Insurance		
Professional liability insurance	One of the broadest liability insurance policies around, it protects your interests if you're named in a lawsuit—$2 million per occurrence and $6 million aggregate annually.	See the Individual Professional Liability Insurance Program brochure in your new or renewing member kit, or call toll-free 888-253-1474.
Optional insurance for you and your family	A full line of coverage tailored to fit your specific needs, including Disability, Medical, Dental, Cancer, Group Term Life and All-Risk Business Equipment insurance.	Online at www.amtabenefits.com, or call toll-free 866-803-6773 (Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Central time).
Business and Marketing Tools		
AMTA's Find a Massage Therapist® national locator service	A nationally promoted locator service where Professional Active members can list their practice information, hours of operation and services offered.	Online at www.findamassagetherapist.org, or call toll-free 888-THE-AMTA.
Use of AMTA logo	Downloadable logos for print and web. As a member you're encouraged to promote your practice and your profession with the AMTA logo.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/member/download_logos.html.
Online practice resources	Tools to help you build and market your practice. Look online to: • download massage photos for print and web. • create your own website. • create a custom client e-newsletter. • write a business/marketing plan. • get sample press releases for your practice.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/member/marketing.html.
Product discounts	An online Shopping Mall that gives you discounts up to 30 percent off and free shipping on a variety of brand name products for your practice, such as accessories, books, tables and chairs, music and oils, lotions, creams and gels.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/shoppingmall.
Job Bank	An online databank where you can search for massage therapy jobs in your area, and post your resume or a job opening, all for free.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/jobbank.
Classifieds	An online databank where you can search for massage therapy-related items for sale, or add your own listing for free.	Online at www.amtamassage.org/ClassifiedAds.
Networking		
AMTA Chapters	Camaraderie, networking, continuing education and volunteer opportunities at the local level. Mix professionally with peers in your area through chapters in each of the 50 states and Washington, D.C.	Find your chapter office or website online at www.amtamassage.org/about/chaplist.html.
National and chapter volunteer opportunities	AMTA's online volunteer database where you can match yourself with available volunteer opportunities at the national and chapter levels. Positions can last several months or one afternoon. AMTA could not successfully advance the profession without its member volunteers—check it out today!	Online at www.amtamassage.org/AMTA-VolunteerCenter, or call toll-free 877-905-2700, ext. 189.

Meet a Member

Name: Nancy E. Schmitt

Location: Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Member since: 1995

Q: How would you describe your practice?

A: I've spent the last 12 years serving individuals in every stage of wellness, disease and "dis-ease." After I sold my first practice, I created Aviana, Inc., including the Aviana Retreat Center, to fulfill my dream of providing a health and wellness center where individuals of all ages and backgrounds could come to maintain and regain their sense of harmony and balance. At Aviana our motto is to "Turn No One Away" from the multiple benefits of safe and effective touch. We also offer workshops, seminars and classes focusing on self-discovery, preventive and supportive care, movement and more.

I see the touch therapy at Aviana as another bridge between traditional medicine and the touch community. I feel it's opening doors in the medical community, just as many other complementary therapies are trying to do. I've been invited to hospitals to talk about massage and energy, and many nurses take my seminars, as well as massage therapists.

Q: How did you come to this focus for your practice?

A: It didn't take long after I graduated in 1996. I graduated from the Pennsylvania School of Muscle Therapy, and I still remember a strict lesson on cancer being contraindicated for massage. Back then it was the traditional view. I was about to open my first practice when I was diagnosed with cancer—so I found myself, at a time when I needed massage most, contraindicated. That led me to take each penny I earned and reinvest in study, all over the country, to learn as much I could about massage therapy for contraindicated people.

Q: What role has research played in the development of your practice and teaching?

A: It hasn't always been easy to find research. When I started out, hospitals were still calling massage "exercise," because they didn't understand massage therapy. Through the years I've learned to trust a combination of most recent scientific information available on modalities, and my inner wisdom, or "gut." It's a mix using the left and right brain at the same time.

I'm familiar with the work of cancer massage educators such as Tracy Walton (MA) and Gayle MacDonald (OR). I'm glad that they're out there teaching now, too—it used to be there was no one teaching how to serve the contraindicated populations.

Q: Has being an AMTA member helped you in your professional career?

A: Being part of AMTA has helped in a huge way—not just in the creation of my body of work, and learning and teaching it, but in business as a whole. I think being in AMTA gives you a professional edge. The standing of AMTA, with the wealth of information they've made available to the public, has been a huge benefit.

AMTA has opened a lot of doors to the medical community, and I like to think of Aviana as representing AMTA well in helping to develop those connections. I didn't expect to still be in business 12 years later, but I love massage, I love what it does for people, and I love engaging skeptics and changing their minds.

To learn more about Schmitt and her practice, please visit www.avianabody.com.

Do you know a member therapist who should be profiled in Meet a Member*? Let us know at handson@amtamassage.org!*

Building Research Literacy *Continued from page 1*

- how it can strengthen and validate the clinical claims we make;
- how it can involve us in our clinical practice and contribute to the expansion, evolution and reinvention of the massage therapy industry as a distinct profession.

We also started a discussion on perceptions of research in our online forum. This dialogue can still be viewed at www.amt-ltd.org.au/forum.

By conference time in October, many delegates had already begun to revise their ideas of the usefulness and relevance of research. Of course, we were extremely lucky to have Martha Menard there—her charm and quiet confidence made her the perfect ambassador for our chosen theme! The conference also allowed us to showcase the work of Judy Lovas, whose doctoral thesis on the effects of massage therapy for patients with spinal cord injuries is partially funded by a research grant from AMT.

Many attendees left with a new sense of empowerment from the knowledge that a case study they compiled in their own clinic could form the basis of a body of work that would advance the industry towards greater public awareness of the benefits of massage therapy.

It seems to me that research is one of the great communal tasks that a group of professionals can engage in. It has the potential to create a deep sense of connection in an industry that is dominated by people working alone and sometimes unsupported in their often-isolated practices.

Continuing to promote the research agenda is vital in Australia, because our current government largely subsidizes the private health insurance industry through income tax incentives and levies. Most of our large private health funds now offer partial payment for massage therapy treatment. However, the massage industry here is self-regulated, which means that the private health funds have been able to set their own terms. Supporting and promoting research can only strengthen our bargaining position and help us to reclaim our portion of the complementary health care agenda.

In the eight months since AMT's research conference, education standards for massage therapy have rocketed to the forefront of the agenda. A lot of opinion has formed around the concept of introducing a baccalaureate degree. At least two Australian post-secondary institutions are developing degree curricula. Part of the reasoning behind this drive is the recognition that more highly-educated massage therapists will be needed to start claiming a larger portion of the research pie. I believe that bringing massage therapy into universities will be a huge leap in that direction.

AMT is a not-for-profit company that represents massage therapists and massage therapy students in Australia. AMT was established in 1966 and is the oldest association in Australia to promote massage therapy. To learn more, please visit www.amt-ltd.org.au.

There's No Place Like Oz

By Martha Brown Menard (VA)

It was a great privilege and pleasure to have been the keynote speaker at AMT's conference. Three days of talking about the need for more research with colleagues was wonderful; seeing them understand the important role that massage practitioners can play in advancing the profession through understanding and using research in daily practice—priceless. I remain impressed by the high educational standards of Australian therapists, and their corresponding skill and expertise. In this area, we have much to learn from them.

Australia is a fabulous place to visit, and the people can teach a Southerner a thing or two about hospitality. I now have several new mates I hope to see in Boston this fall for the First International Fascia Research Congress (www.fascia2007.com).

Focus on the Profession: Accreditation

As part of AMTA's commitment to provide you with relevant industry information, we're launching a new series of articles: Focus on the Profession. Each article in the series will explore an important cornerstone of the profession: accreditation, certification, licensure and research.

The profession is in a key stage of its development, and awareness of these cornerstones is important for all massage therapy professionals as we work together to establish standards that lay the groundwork for future success.

To get a sense of how our members view these cornerstones of the profession, we mailed a survey last November. The responses will be featured in these articles. We'd like to thank all of you who participated, and we hope that these articles provide valuable insights for our members.

What is Accreditation?
According to the United States Department of Education, accreditation is the status of public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an educational institution or program that meets the agency's standards and requirements.

Most AMTA member therapists feel that consistent standards are important to ensure quality. In AMTA's November 2006 survey, 94 percent of professional members agreed that consumers have a right to expect that massage therapists have consistent training and skills. Ninety-one percent agree there should be minimum education requirements for individuals to enter the field of massage therapy. Furthermore, 59 percent felt that their own initial training adequately prepared them for the profession. But only 9 percent felt that most massage therapists are adequately trained to practice.

Accreditation can help by providing standards for schools or programs. It helps schools establish credibility and stand out from the competition, assures students that they are receiving a quality education, and helps the public identify competent practitioners. AMTA members agree: 90 percent of survey respondents believe that *all* schools should be accredited.

The State of Accreditation Today
Currently, accreditation is voluntary for the approximately 1,500 massage therapy schools in the United States, and there are 313 accredited schools. There are two main types of accreditation agencies: *institutional* and *programmatic*. An institutional accrediting agency accredits an entire institution or school. Such agencies include the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES), the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET), the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT), the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) and the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

Programmatic accreditation accredits the specialized educational programs that prepare students for entry into a specific profession. The two agencies that offer programmatic accreditation for massage therapy are the Commission on Massage Therapy Accreditation (COMTA) and the National Accrediting Commission of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences (NACCAS). COMTA also provides institutional accreditation for those schools that offer only massage therapy and bodywork programs. AMTA's survey shows 88 percent of member respondents agree all massage therapists should graduate from an accredited school.

Council of Schools and Accreditation
The AMTA Council of Schools (COS) is made up of more than 500 administrators, owners and directors of schools with entry-level massage therapy programs of 500 or more in-class hours. Its members have conducted extensive research to understand accreditation and how it can help students. Their research has included surveys, school industry dialogues, research on accreditation agencies, and research on the accreditation best practices of other professions.

"Since so few schools are accredited now, if all schools became accredited it would represent a huge leap forward," says Demara Stamler (VA), first vice president of the AMTA COS Board. "Accreditation is needed, and it's being driven by public demand. School accreditation is a key factor influencing school selection among prospective massage therapists. It's also a good way for schools to establish a reputation for quality, and a necessity for schools hoping to qualify for federal financial aid."

Graduation from a recognized, accredited school is also becoming a requirement to legally practice in some states. It's clear that accreditation is becoming a more important consideration, both for those looking to attend massage therapy school and for the schools themselves as they work to gain a competitive edge and prepare their students for a successful future.

To learn more about accreditation or to contact the accrediting agencies, visit the U.S Department of Education website at www.ed.gov and The Council for Higher Education website at www.chea.org. The U.S. Department of Education website also provides a directory of accredited massage schools.

Advocate for Accreditation: Demara Stamler

Demara Stamler (VA), director of the Potomac Massage Training Institute (PMTI) and first vice president of the AMTA Council of Schools Board, is a big believer in accreditation. But when she started school in 1987, attending an accredited school wasn't a realistic option. At the time PMTI was the only school in the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area—and didn't become a COMTA-accredited school until the '90s.

In 2001, after working in a chiropractic office and in private practice, Stamler became the director of the school she once attended. Since then, she's worked hard to increase the profession's credibility. During her tenure, PMTI has helped found the Massage Therapy Research Consortium, a group of 11 schools dedicated to furthering massage therapy research. She believes that research and standards are critical for the profession's future.

"My belief in educational standards is the reason I got involved in the Council of Schools," says Stamler. "We need a standardized baseline education across the profession so that the public can know that they're getting something safe from practitioners they can trust—and accreditation is a big piece of that."

Is There Something New in Your Mailbox?

From time to time you may receive mailings from companies that work with AMTA to provide you with optional membership benefits. These benefits include special credit card programs and optional insurance programs such as term life insurance. AMTA staff and volunteers are working with the companies to make sure their mailings clearly show their relationship with AMTA.

Recently, you may have received a mailing describing an Emergency Assistance Plus (EA+) Program, offered by AMTA's optional insurance administrator, AGIA. Unfortunately, the company didn't clearly show their connection with the program or with AMTA in this mailing, and some members were concerned that it wasn't legitimate.

AGIA has many optional benefits they can provide to members. One way to know if a mailing is actually from AGIA is to look for the name of John B. Wigle, a representative of AGIA, or AMTA's Director of Member Services, Lay Quek. If one of them has signed the letter, you can be sure it's OK.

The National Office will also occasionally advise members by e-mail of major mailings about optional benefit programs. If you have any questions about these programs, please contact AMTA Member Services toll-free at 877-905-2700, or by e-mail at info@amtamassage.org.

New HOD Bylaw Amendment Gives Chapters More Flexibility

Chapters may now submit an elected chapter officer as a substitute delegate to the National Office at least one week prior to the House of Delegates Meeting, instead of at least four weeks prior to the meeting as previously required.

AMTA's Board of Directors approved this bylaw amendment recommendation submitted to the 2006 House of Delegates by South Carolina on April 11, 2007.

Also, the board directed staff to look into and report back with the cost and impact of the Florida recommendation suggesting AMTA join the Coalition to Preserve Patient Access to Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

The board also directed staff and the Chapter Relations Committee to look into the New Hampshire recommendation asking that the board designate a workgroup to determine a fair and equitable division of revenue from online education, paid for by chapter members, with revenues returned to chapters to which online education participants belong.

House of Delegates Operational Committee Chair Shirley Cooper will deliver a follow-up report at the House of Delegates Meeting, September 27, 2007, in Cincinnati.

Go Online to Learn, Earn and Save

AMTA members always earn big savings on the AMTA website! Add these addresses to your "favorites" list for one-stop discounts on continuing education classes, massage products, books, CDs, home study, *The Business of Massage* and more:

- www.amtaonlinetraining.org;
- www.amtamassage.org/a/shoppingmall.

Enjoy the best products at the best prices! Visit us online to take advantage of all the resources AMTA has put together for your benefit. Let AMTA help you expand your knowledge, stock your practice and reach professional excellence.

MASSAGE THERAPY FOUNDATION

Join the foundation in expanding the boundaries of our knowledge and earn continuing education (CE) contact hours at the foundation-sponsored sessions at the AMTA 2007 National Convention in Cincinnati, September 26–29.

FOUNDATION COURSES OFFERED AT CONVENTION

Best Practices for the Massage & Bodywork Profession

3 contact hours

Presented by Ravensara Travillian, PhD, LMP. This course teaches participants how to read scientific research articles on massage, and then apply them in clinical practice. Participants will learn how to find the important and most relevant information in an article. The many hands-on exercises make the material accessible to both visual and verbal learners.

Case Reports in Massage: Why They're Important and How to Submit Your Own

4 contact hours

Presented by Michael Hamm (WA), LMP, winner of the 2005 Foundation Student Case Report Contest. Case reports are the simplest and most sorely needed contributions to the massage research world. Many skilled therapists already possess the interests, training and clientele to submit quality case reports. This session will address remaining obstacles and set motivated participants on the path to submitting their research.

Understanding the Research Process & Research Reports: Knowing What to Look for – and Why

4 contact hours

Presented by Glenn M. Hymel (LA), EdD, LMT. This session will provide an overview of both the research process that tries to advance the scientific basis for any discipline or profession, and research reports that communicate what our research efforts have revealed. In both cases, it's important to know what to look for and why researchers do what they do. This session speaks to the "what and why" aspects of research, and emphasizes the implications for massage therapy educators and practitioners alike.

Protocol Development and Research Measurements

4 contact hours

Presented by Clint Chandler (CO), LMT. This course is designed to identify some useful strategies and establish a solid rationale for the development of treatment protocols that can be used in clinical practice and in scientific research. This session will also cover basic measurements that monitor client progress and therapy effectiveness.

Panel Discussion—Research and the Profession

4 contact hours

Moderated by Massage Therapy Foundation President Diana L. Thompson (WA), LMP. Scheduled speakers and topics include:

- Jane Buckle, PhD, "Effects of Massage on Brain Function using SPECT Imaging."
- Janet Kahn (VT), PhD, "Effects Clients Notice from Massage: Updated Results from a Study in Nine Student Clinics."
- Leslie Korn, PhD, MPH, "Polarity Therapy for Dementia Caregivers."
- Patricia A. Sharpe, PhD, "Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine for Weight Control in the United States."
- David Steinhorn, MD, "Effects of Five Minute Foot Massages on Pediatric Intensive Care Unit Patients."
- 2007 Student Case Report Contest Winner—Winner TBD.

Post-Convention Workshop: Advanced Muscle Energy Techniques for Massage Therapists

12 contact hours

Presented by Leon Chaitow, DO, ND. Muscle Energy Techniques (MET) involves the use of mild isometric or isotonic contractions to facilitate subsequent mobilizations or stretching procedures. These methods are ideal for use in conjunction with massage and other soft tissue manipulation procedures. This workshop will focus on practical clinical applications backed by research.

Registration Fees*:

• Early Registration (Before August 3)	$275
• Regular Registration (After August 3)	$325
• Nonmember	$350

**All proceeds will benefit the Massage Therapy Foundation.*

For dates, times and to register please visit the convention registration page on AMTA's website at www.amtamassage.org/education/NationalConvention2007.html.

Keynote Address
Joan Borysenko

Continuing Education

- CORE Institute's Sports & Performance Bodywork—A Four System Approach – George Kousaleos
- The Making of a Spa Professional: Career Coaching from the Experts – Lori Hutchinson, Jenean LaRoche, Randy Schreck, Diane Trieste
- Assessment of Common Benign & Malignant Skin Lesions & Cutaneous Infections – Allison Vidimos
- Compassionate Presence – Joan Borysenko
- Coordination Pattern Training: Release, Repattern, Renew – Elizabeth Wetzig
- The Mystery of Pain – Doug Nelson
- Pharmaceuticals and Massage: Confidence with Today's Aging Clients – Bryan Born
- Best Practices for the Massage & Bodywork Profession – Ravensara Travillian
- Spinal Reflex Analysis, Level One – L. Frank Jarrell
- Mastectomy Massage – Cheryl Chapman
- Addressing the Needs of an Aging Population – Meir Schneider
- Neuromuscular Evaluation & Treatment Plans – Dennis Price
- Massage Therapy & Pathology: Psychiatric Disorders – Ruth Werner
- Case Reports in Massage: Why They're Important & How to Submit Your Own – Michael Hamm
- Designing Significant Learning Connections for All – Pamela Rose
- Manual & Therapeutic Management of Dysfunctional Breathing – Leon Chaitow
- Mouth Marketing: How to Promote Yourself Verbally – Jenn Sommermann
- Understanding the Research Process & Research Reports: Knowing What to Look For, and Why! – Glenn Hymel
- Evaluating Student Performance—Are They Getting It? – Nancy Toner Weinberger
- Know Thyself – Robert K. King
- Integrative Approach to the Wrist & Hand – Mike Dixon
- Identify & Prevent Injuries Before They Occur – Fiona Rattray
- Business Skills (Intermediate and Advanced) – Pete Whitridge
- Massage Precautions for the Newest Conditions and Medications Facing our Aging Population – Bryan Born
- Protocol Development & Research Measurements – Clint Chandler
- Ethics for Educators – Dianne Polseno
- Everyday Ethics – Dianne Polseno
- Highlights of Thai Massage – Kay Rynerson
- Research and The Profession – Various Speakers
- Teaching Pathology from the Heart – Ruth Werner
- Massage Therapy Foundation's Post-Convention Workshop: Advanced Muscle Energy Techniques for Massage Therapists – Leon Chaitow

Create New Connections in Cincinnati

Register before August 3 for Reduced Rates

Create new connections at the AMTA 2007 National Convention in Cincinnati, September 26–29. You can boost your career with continuing education (CE) contact hours while networking with your peers in the profession! Whether you're new to the field of massage therapy or a seasoned practitioner, there are classes designed for your level of expertise.

AMTA has rounded up some of the best and brightest educators in the industry to lead you through in-depth demonstrations of techniques and lively discussions of issues you face as a massage therapist.

George Kousaleos (FL) will teach AMTA's first-ever pre-convention workshop, "CORE Institute's Sports & Performance Bodywork—A Four System Approach" as a 16-hour course on Tuesday, September 25 and Wednesday, September 26. Be sure to sign up early for this specially priced workshop because it will certainly sell out.

This is only one of the many great education offerings this year. You'll leave convention with valuable, real-world skills and up to 19 CE contact hours. We've also expanded our education track for massage therapy school teachers.

Early registration is still available to all AMTA members at the rate of $395 for the full convention. Hurry, because after August 3 rates jump to $484. That's a savings of more than $85! Plus, many classes do sell out, so the sooner you register, the more likely you are to get into all the classes you want.

We make it easy to register! Just go online to www.amtamassage.org and click on the link to the AMTA 2007 National Convention for more information and a registration form. You can also request a convention brochure by calling Heather Stearns at 877-905-2700, ext. 143.

2007 Calendar

September 25
AMTA Board of Directors Meeting
Cincinnati, Ohio
Contact: 877-905-2700, ext. 157
gmitchell@amtamassage.org

September 26–29
AMTA National Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio
Contact: 877-905-2700, ext. 143
hstearns@amtamassage.org

October 4–5
First International Fascia Research Congress
Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts
Contact: www.fascia2007.com

October 21-27
National Massage Therapy Awareness Week
Contact: 877-905-2700, ext. 133
kkarapetian@amtamassage.org

HandsOn
The Newsletter of the American Massage Therapy Association
500 Davis St., Suite 900 • Evanston, IL 60201-4695 • HandsOn@amtamassage.org